

Lesson Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

Lesson ID: 72356-73693

Title: Lack of Cultural Understanding

Operation/Exercise Name: RESTORE HOPE

Observed: 23 Jul 1993

Originator: 1ST BN 7THMAR

POC: LT KENNY      Commercial: (619)725-6774    DSN: 3656774

5. (U) OBSERVATION:

Lack of knowledge about Somalia culture inhibited decisions and actions of Marines in daily interaction with locals.

6. (U) DISCUSSION:

As Marines interacted with the local populace it became evident that they did not have a high comfort factor with cultural interaction. Only through self discipline and judgment were they able to keep tempers and emotions in check.

7. (U) LESSON LEARNED:

Leaders should become more proactive in adding to their Marines' knowledge of th cultural situation. This is much more vital in humanitarian vice combat operations.

8. (U) RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Leaders at each level need to solicit the assistance of educators, nationals and speakers in the history of their destination.

9. (U) COMMENTS:

We should know as much as possible about the people we are attempting to help. A beneficial 45 minutes spent with a Somalia gave a quick history and a series of cultural practices. Marines' attitudes improved markedly with this insight.

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